of the customers had a tick. You'd notice that someone was staring too long at his hand. Another was talking to himself. Another was writing. It was more than just a tick however. The whole city was like that. What was the use of running away?

Once a day he'd leave the House to go shopping and come back with a liter bottle of Coke and a small white plastic bag of toiletries. If I saw him returning, huddled and oppressed-looking in a long coat even in the summer, I'd ask him if he wouldn't mind letting me look in the bag. I know I was intrusive, and his worker would not have approved, but as Adam said, his worker wasn't responsible either.

Of course I knew what he wanted. "PRN?" I asked. He made a barely perceptible nod, his handsome scratched and bleeding face averted, probably suppressing a smile.

*

When I relieved Caspar he was furious. Michael had cut his face for the second time in a row. What else wasn't new?

Michael had presented himself, principally his cut and bleeding face, at the reinforced glass of the office door. I thought of it as a form of closed-circuit television, but unlike the security video it was bi-directional, live, and totally functional. His face was a commercial for a "PRN," like a